

# REVERSIBLE DECORATIVE MOLDINGS BETWEEN FLOOR AND WALL OR WALL AND CEILING

## 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention is directed to a decorative molding for use between a floor and wall or between a wall and ceiling. The molding has at least two decorative faces which differ in at least one property. In one embodiment, a single molding has two faces which differ in the design, pattern and/or color carried by each face. The moldings are suitable designed to match or contrast with prefabricated building panels, especially composite panels such as those panels commonly known as laminate panels.

## 2. Background of the Invention

Laminate building panels have increasingly become more popular as an alternative to conventional building materials. In fact, laminate building panels for use as floor panels, ceiling panels, and wall panels are displacing conventional building materials such as wood, carpet, tile and similar materials in homes, offices and other commercial environments.

When such laminate panels are used as floors, they “float” above a subfloor, i.e., they are not anchored or affixed to the subfloor. This floating permits the laminate panels to expand and contract due to temperature fluctuations. When installing such panels as a floor, it is conventional to leave a small gap between the edge of the floor and the adjacent walls to permit such expansion.

However, the presence of a gap is unsightly and permits dirt, dust, and other debris to lodge in the gap, detracting from the finished look of a newly installed floor.

Accordingly, it has been the practice to use a molding to cover the gap between a floor and an adjacent wall.

However, because there is a wide variety in the colors and/or patterns of laminate panels, providing a molding to match or contrast with such panels requires a large number of moldings having matching or contrasting texture, design, color and/or patterns which requires a supplier of such moldings to maintain a large inventory of moldings.

### 3. Summary of the Invention

It is an object of the invention to provide a molding having a plurality of decorative faces wherein each such decorative face has a decorative design, pattern, texture and/or color or shape which differs from at least one other decorative face on the molding.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a flooring system including floor panels with a matching or contrasting molding within a single molding element.

It is a further object of the invention to reduce the inventory of moldings necessary to match or contrast with a laminate or other flooring panels.

It is a still further object of the invention to increase the product use, e.g., from only laminate to laminate and wood, tile, carpet and other products.

These and other objects of the invention will be apparent in connection with reading the detailed description of the further embodiments.

### 4. Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 illustrates a wall base having multiple decorative surfaces according to the invention.

Fig. 2 illustrates a base shoe having reversible decorative surfaces according to the invention.

Fig. 3 shows a typical installation of wall base and shoe base moldings against a finished wall and installed floor.

Fig. 4 illustrates a molding according to the invention having two decorative faces of different shape.

## 5. Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Laminate panels generally comprise a decorative surface and a substrate or core material. As the decorative surface materials such as a plastic, foil, printed decor, paint, stain, protective coatings, veneer or laminate may be used. The surface can be manufactured by gluing a laminate onto the core under heat and pressure (HPL process) or by directly laminating (DL) the layers forming the decorative surface onto the core. As core materials can be mentioned wood based materials such as wood particles adhered with a binder, e.g., particle board, fiberboard (both HDF and MDF); or synthetic materials, such as foam or plastics. Alternatively, it can be natural wood or veneered lumber.

When a printed decor is used as the decorative surface, an overlay of an  $\alpha$ -cellulose paper, preferably including hard, abrasive resistant particles of silica, alumina, silicon carbide, diamond and particles having a Moh's hardware similar to such materials, can be added to increase the abrasion resistance of the decorative surface. A mixture of larger particles with small particles or various layers of particles can improve the scratch resistance as well as providing abrasion resistance. Typically, such hard particles have an average particle size of 12-90 $\mu$ m.

While the invention can be employed to make virtually any moldings, such as those between a floor and wall, or between a wall and ceiling, the disclosure of the use of moldings between a floor and wall will facilitate the understanding of the invention.

Typically, a wall base molding is placed at the base of an interior wall to conceal any irregular edges or spaces remaining after the wall has been installed. Wall base also protects the bottom of the wall from damage. Quarter round or base shoe is placed at the juncture between an installed floor and the wall base. The quarter round/base shoe, because it is more flexible than wall base, can cover any irregular spaces between a wall base and the floor. It also covers an irregular edge or spaces where the installed flooring meets the wall base.

#### Wall Base

Different countries will favor select styles of molding including the molded shape as well as the thickness and height or width of the molding.

Using North America as an example, but not excluding other geographic locations:

The typical wall base can encompass a height of 6 inches or larger or a height of 2 ½ inches or smaller and the heights between these two examples. Most typically found wall bases are generally, but not exclusively in the range of 3 ¼ inches, 3 ½ inches to 4 inches in height. The thickness is generally ½ inch to ¾ inch in thickness and can vary to by design choice, being thicker or thinner.

#### Quarter Round

The typical quarter round can vary by thickness as well, usually including a thickness of 5/8 inch to ¾ inch, but not limited to these particular measurements.

## Base Shoe

The typical base shoe differs from quarter round molding. When installed its' profile is higher than its width, whereas, quarter round molding is usually represented as being a true quarter round so that when it is installed its' height profile is equal to its width. The base shoe can typically be  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in height and  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch in width. These measurements can be variable by design choice.

The length of all of the above moldings will vary according to the practices within each geographic location.

The molded shape can vary according to the accepted design found in each geographic area.

The foregoing molding can be made of the same type of materials as are the building panels previously described.

For example, taking the wall base 10 of Fig. 1 as exemplary, the wall base comprises a core 20 of wood based materials, such as solid wood or wood fibers bound together with a binder. Typical of such materials are high density fiberboard (HDF) and medium density fiberboard (MDF).

On either side of core 20 are directly laminated a decorative surface comprising a decor paper impregnated with a liquid thermosetting resin and optionally an overlay paper of  $\alpha$ -cellulose, also impregnated with a thermosetting resin. Typical of such thermosetting resins are melamine resins. It is to be understood that opposite faces 11, 12 of wall base 10 differ in at least one property from each other. The property can be texture, color, pattern or design or molded shape.

For example, face 11 can include a printed decor paper while face 12 can be a laminate adhered to core 20 by means of adhesive. The formation of faces 11, 12 can take place simultaneously or sequentially at the factory. The faces can simply be a difference in the color of

stain or finish or a solid wood product when core 20 is solid wood or the faces 11, 12 can be formed of foil, laminate, veneer or which can contain digital printing and coated with a liquid. Optionally, the faces can be painted, stained or finished with a clear protective material.

As shown in Fig. 2, base shoe 30 has a core 35 of MDF or HDF and two decorative faces 31, 32 where face 32 comprises directly laminated layers of decor paper impregnated with thermosetting resin having an overlay of  $\alpha$ -cellulose, also impregnated with a thermosetting resin. Optionally, hard particles (not shown) can be included to increase both abrasion and scratch resistance of the base shoe 30. Face 32 can comprise a laminate adhesively attached to core 35.

Typically in North America, Quarter Round and Base shoe moldings are anchored using metal fasteners such as nails—standard finishing nails or wire nails applied with the use of pneumatic tools. Screws may be used as well. Alternative systems using adhesives or tracks or fixtures to “snap” or hang the moldings are also available.

When it is desired to install the base shoe molding 30 against the wall base molding 10 and installed floor 50 as shown in Fig. 3, all that is necessary is to select the desired face 11 or 12 for wall base 10 and desired face 31, 32 of base shoe 30 to contrast or complement/match floor 50 and install as shown.

Fig. 4 illustrates a single molding 40 according to the invention having faces 41, 42 which differ from each other in shape. As with the other molding, the faces 41, 42 can also differ in other properties from each other, e.g., texture, design, pattern or color.

Although I have described my invention with regard to the joint between a floor and a wall, it will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art that such disclosure will enable those skilled

in the art to employ the invention between a wall and a ceiling or other intersecting surfaces and make other modifications without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.